

***Erigeron piperianus* Cronq.**

Piper's daisy  
Asteraceae (Aster Family)

**Status:** State Sensitive

**Rank:** G3S3

**General Description:** Slender perennial with a taproot and short branched caudex; stem  $1\frac{1}{4}$  to 4 inches high, seldom much exceeding the leaves, hirsute with mostly appressed or ascending hairs; leaves numerous, not all basal, linear or nearly so, lax and usually curved, up to  $1\frac{2}{3}$  inch long and  $\frac{1}{16}$  inch wide, hispid-ciliate on the margins, especially below, and appressed-hairy on the surface, the lower with conspicuously enlarged, whitish-hardened base; heads solitary or few, small, the disk  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch wide; involucre  $\frac{1}{8}$  to  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch high, spreading-hirsute with long white hairs; rays 25-40, yellow,  $\frac{1}{8}$  to  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch long,  $\frac{1}{16}$  inch wide; disk corollas mostly  $\frac{1}{8}$  to  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch long; pappus of 15-25 bristles and often some short outer setae.

**Identification Tips:** The taxon is most easily confused with *Erigeron linearis*. The margins of the lower leaves of *E. piperianus* have spreading hairs as opposed to appressed hairs in *E. linearis*. The taxon is also closely related to *E. chrysopsidis*. *Erigeron piperianus* is distinguished by the pubescence on the stem which is appressed or ascending rather than spreading, the smaller involucre, and narrower, laxer leaves. Also, *E. piperianus* is a smaller and more delicate plant which apparently does not overlap the distribution of *E. chrysopsidis*.

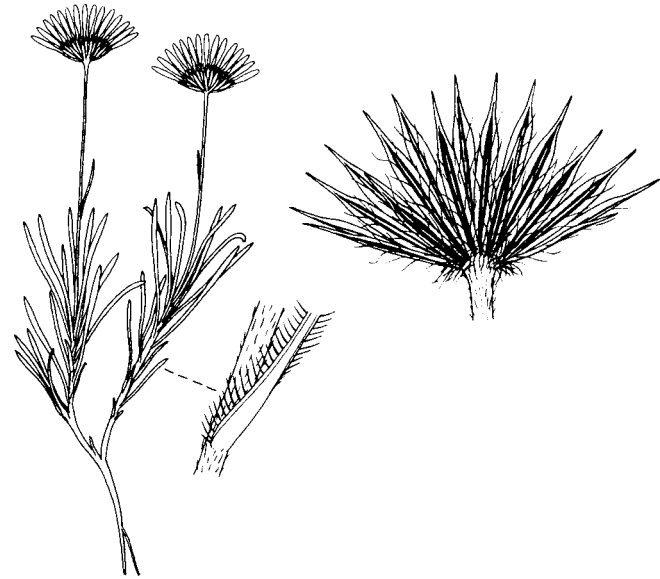
**Phenology:** Blooms May through June.

**Range:** Regional endemic, occurring only in the Columbia Basin of Washington. It has been found recently in Adams, Benton, Douglas, Franklin, Grant, Klickitat, and Yakima counties and historically in Kittitas County.

**Habitat:** Dry, open places, often with sagebrush. It grows on level ground to moderate slopes of all aspects at elevations ranging from 400 to 2250 feet. The soil is typically well drained, and is generally somewhat alkaline. It occurs most commonly in the big sagebrush/bluebunch wheatgrass plant community type and to a lesser extent in the winterfat/Sandberg's bluegrass community type.

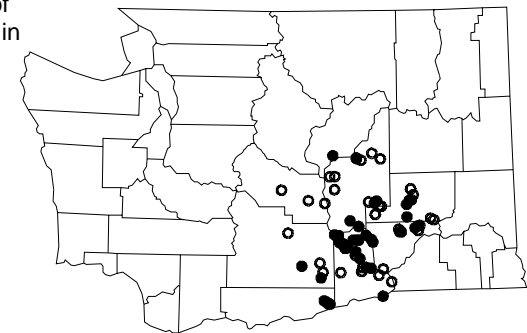
***Erigeron piperianus***

Piper's daisy



©1955 University of Washington Press. Illustration by John H. Rumely.

Known distribution of  
*Erigeron piperianus* in  
Washington



● Current (1980+)  
○ Historic (older than 1980)

## ***Erigeron piperianus***

Piper's daisy



## ***Erigeron piperianus***

Piper's daisy

**Ecology:** The taxon is most common in undisturbed areas of the sagebrush steppe. It has also been reported growing in grazed and burned sites, so can withstand some disturbance. The species response to periodic fires is not known.

**State Status Comments:** Although there are some relatively large remaining populations, many of the extant sites are quite small and in isolated remnant fragments of habitat. Much of the historic range of the species has been converted to agriculture.

**Inventory Needs:** Suitable habitats throughout the historic range of the species need to be systematically inventoried.

**Threats and Management Concerns:** The major threat to the taxon is loss of its habitat to agricultural development. Overgrazing could threaten the taxon, yet it seems to be somewhat tolerant of moderate grazing pressure. Weedy annual species such as cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*), Russian thistle (*Salsola kali*), and tumblemustard (*Sisymbrium altissimum*) may compete with the species for habitat and resources.

### **References:**

Hitchcock, C. L., A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey, and J.W. Thompson.  
1955. *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest, Part 5: Compositae*. University of Washington Press, Seattle. 343 pp.